even if there is a delay in building up of the output torque of the engine, the transmission torque capacity of the starting clutch has not increased as high as the conventional art when the output torque of the engine actually builds up, and there is produced a slippage in the starting clutch. Thereafter, as the transmission torque capacity of the starting clutch increases, of the output torque of the engine, the ratio of output torque which is to be transmitted to the drive wheels via the starting clutch is increased. Consequently, even if the accelerator pedal is abruptly depressed during power-off running, the drive torque of the drive wheels is allowed to build up moderately, whereby the generation of surging vibrations is prevented. The predetermined time may be determined depending upon time that has elapsed since the accelerator pedal is depressed, or time may be determined as the predetermined time when a detected engine output torque exceeds the transmission torque capacity of the starting clutch.

Please replace page 7, paragraph 1, beginning at line 15 with:

Note that in an embodiment of the invention which will be described later, step S2 shown in Fig. 4 corresponds to the first control means, steps S4 to S6, S11 and S12 in Fig. 4 to the second control means, and steps S18, S19 in Fig. 4 to the third control means, and steps S14 to S17 in Fig. 4 to the delay means.

Please replace page 8, paragraph 7, beginning at line 25 with:

A mechanical friction clutch for use on a vehicle with a clutch pedal is used for the starting clutch 2, which is normally engaged by virtue of the biasing force of a diaphragm spring 2a, whereas it is disengaged by a release fork 2b via a release bearing 2c, when the diaphragm spring 2a is pressed in. Then, a piston rod 9a of a

hydraulic cylinder 9 serving as an actuator is brought into abutment with the release fork 2b so as to operate the release fork 2b by the hydraulic cylinder 9, to thereby arbitrarily control the transmission torque capacity of the starting clutch 2. As shown in Fig. 2, a hydraulic circuit 10 of the hydraulic cylinder 9 includes an electromagnetic control valve 101 which is controlled by a clutch controller 11. The clutch controller 11 is adapted to control the supply and discharge of hydraulic oil to and from the hydraulic cylinder 9. Oil discharged from an electric pump 103 is supplied to an oil supply path 102 communicating a control valve 101 via a check valve 104. The electric pump 103 has, as a driving source, a motor 103a which is controlled by the clutch controller 11. Connected to the oil supply path 102 are a relief valve 105, an accumulator 106 and an oil pressure sensor 107, whereby signals from the oil pressure sensor 107 are inputted into the clutch controller 11. And, in case the oil pressure in the oil supply 102 detected by the oil pressure sensor 107 decreases below a predetermined line pressure, the electric pump 103 is driven until the oil pressure in the oil supply path 102 reaches the predetermined line pressure.

Please replace page 11, paragraph 2, beginning at line 21 with:

When the vehicle is started, the transmission torque capacity of the starting clutch 2 is controlled so as to gradually increase whereas the starting clutch 2 is controlled to be disengaged when the brake pedal 13 is depressed. In addition, while the vehicle is running, as shown in Fig. 4, it is determined whether or not the vehicle speed V is a predetermined vehicle speed YV or more (S1), and in case $V \geqq YV$, transmitted to the controller 11 is a state in which the starting clutch 2 completely transmits the engine output torque or a stroke position of the piston rod 9 where the